

Recent Press Reports

If anyone's got an hour or so spare on Mondays and have always harboured a burning desire to take over this job, you may just be in luck. Have a word with either me or Mandy and we'll explain the ins and outs, up and downs etc. - Colin

Pilgrim's Cross/Norbreck Castle 5k

Harriers Walk Away With Athletics Prizes (Press date 29/09/07)

As the summer racing season continues, Todmorden's athletes have been continuing to make their mark, both on the fells and on the road.

At the recent Pilgrim's Cross Fell Race in Rossendale, Tod's star men Shaun Godsman and Andrew Wrench both walked away with prizes.

In a sizable field of 160, Godsman finished second after being narrowly denied a victory by Horwich's England International Darren Kay. Wrench finished in 39.33, just over a minute behind his club mate to take the prize for first veteran. Elsewhere in the race other Harriers were in attendance with Simon Anderton running well to cross the line in 65th position in 49.03, just over three minutes and 30 places in front of Keith Parkinson, with Peter Ehrhardt following in 59.12.

Away from the fells, a duo of Todmorden's Veteran 60s travelled to Blackpool to compete in the Norbreck Castle 5k and came away laden with prizes. Bohuslav Barlow headed the field as 1st V60 in a time of 23.38, whilst Ian Stansfield took the 2nd V60 prize in a time of 32.12.

Blackshawhead/Andy O'Sullivan/Ben Nevis

Records Tumble as Weather Kind to Fete Fell Race (Press date 05/09/07)

The 2nd Blackshawhead Fete Fell Race took place last Saturday under sunny, dry skies, which were a striking contrast to conditions in last year's event which was buffeted by howling gales and waterlogged ground. The better weather drew an improved entry, with 82 runners starting the race, ready to tackle the route which climbs to the bleak summit of Standing Stone Hill before returning to the fete field via the Pennine Way over Heptonstall Moor.

One consequence of the better weather, was new course records for both the men and the ladies. The men's being set by winner Jonathan Hare of Halifax Harriers whose time of 36.44 saw him clear of second man Chris Smale of organising club Todmorden, Smale however did have the consolation of taking the veterans prize. The new benchmark for the ladies was set by Lisa Lacon of Holmfirth who stopped the clock at 41.43.

In the spirit of the village fete, prizes were also awarded to the first locals to cross the line. Heptonstall resident Simon Bourne, who runs for Dark Peak Fell Runners, went home with the local men's title, whilst Badger Lane's very own Paula Haworth earned the local ladies' prize by finishing in a time of 56.55.

After the race, organisers Sarah and Andy Glyde thanked all those who helped with the planning and administration of the event, including the Fete committee, the local landowners and the course marshals.

The day after the Blackshawhead Race, many of the Todmorden runners who helped stage the race travelled to Rochdale to compete in the Andy O'Sullivan's Trail 5k. The race was organised to celebrate Andy's 25th year of organising races and drew 180 competitors to the mixed terrain route around Whittaker and Rakewood.

A dozen Todmorden runners were amongst the starters, as the race had been selected as a counter in the club's 2007 Championship and precious ranking points were up for grabs.

First Todmorden athlete home was Richard Blakeley, who finished 30th in a time of 35.28, missing out on the veteran 60 prize by just two seconds after being pipped by Rochdale's Dave Schofield.

First Todmorden lady was Kerry Edwards, who continued to build on her promise by finishing 5th lady in a time of 36.36.

Further a field, a group of Harriers took the high road to Ben Nevis to compete in the annual mountain race. In tricky and wet conditions, the first Todmorden finisher was the in form Jon Wright, who finished 10th place in a time of one hour and thirty nine minutes, seven minutes adrift of race winner Ian Holmes who completed the course in one hour and thirty two minutes for a remarkable 6th win. Next Todmorden runner home was Alex Whitem in 13th position, he was followed by club mate Andrew Horsfall making a welcome return from injury in a time of one hour and fifty nine.

Lake District Mountain Trial/Yorkshireman

Ali and Phil Fly the Flag in the Lakeland Hills (Press Date 13/09/07)

Press date Two very different tests of stamina occupied local athletes last weekend, one in the Lake District, whilst the other was closer to home.

Firstly, The Lake District Mountain Trial is a long established event, which asks competitors to navigate over notoriously tough courses of up to 20 miles on the high Cumbrian Fells.

In the men's event first Calderdale man home was Todmorden's Jon Wright in a highly credible 15th position in an event weighted towards local Lake District runners, winner Jim Davies having made the short trip from Borrowdale to complete the course in 4 hours and 12 minutes. Next Tod man home was Phil Hodgson also showing fine form by finishing in 42nd place, just missing out on the prize for the first veteran 50.

Shortly afterwards first Calder Valley men arrived home, with Jonathan Emberton finishing in 49th place, followed by Phil Scarf in 58th.

Next local man was Harrier Richard Leonard in 114th, he was followed by two club mates who are veterans of the event, John Page in 128th and John Crummett in 132nd.

In the separate ladies' event Todmorden's ever improving Ali Richards showed her prodigious ability in this kind of event by finishing in 7th place in a field packed with quality, her time of 4 hours and 20 minutes just 20 minutes behind winner Karen Nash.

Next Calderdale lady home was another Todmorden runner who consistently rates highly in Lakes' events, Jane Smith, who crossed the line in 16th place. Calder Valley were represented by Jackie Scarf, who came home in 22nd position.

Whilst these athletes were proving their credentials as mountain experts, others were proving themselves 'Yorkshiremen' on the byways around Keighley as runners competed in the Yorkshireman Half and Full Off-Road Marathons.

The twin race routes take runners from moor land bogs to hard tracked bridleways and paths, as they wind around the picturesque Craven countryside in the events fast becoming regarded as classics of their kind. This year conditions were perfect and this was reflected in fast times throughout the fields.

In the full marathon attracted 120 hardy souls to the solo section, and a further 40 to the pairs event, the solo competitors included Todmorden's Stuart Boulton who crossed the line in 75th place with a time of 4 hours and 56 minutes, and Claire Duffield who completed in 5 hours and 17 minutes placing her as 11th lady.

In the half marathon it was Calder Valley who dominated with Ben Mounsey and Jo Waites both scoring emphatic victories for the second year running.

Elsewhere in the field, Richard O'Sullivan and Mel Blackhurst flew the flag for Todmorden, and although detailed results are unavailable at the time of writing, both completed the course in good style.

Langdale Half Marathon/Good Shepherd/High Peak 40

Race Hots Up for Club Crown (Press date 28/09/07)

Todmorden Harriers' club championships are a step nearer to reaching their conclusions after the two most recent counting races.

On the roads, Mel Blackhurst has tightened her grip on the ladies' title by a fine run at the Langdale Half Marathon, in which she recorded a time of 1.48.27, giving her a position of 105th from a field of over 300. Other Harriers who made the journey to Cumbria for the notoriously tough event were Pete Robinson who finished just 4 seconds in front of Blackhurst, and Stuart Boulton who came home in 1.57.02.

In the club fell championships, Shaun Godsman continues to set the pace after a fourth place at the Good Shepherd Fell Race in Mytholmroyd. Godsman finished the race in 1.59.05, some ten minutes behind winner, Karl Gray of Calder Valley.

In the ladies' championship, Ali Richards moved a step closer to the title after finishing second lady in the Mytholmroyd race in a time of 2 hours and 33 minutes, retaining her lead over a host of challengers for the end of year shield. Other notable Tod performances in the Good Shepherd came from an in-form James Riley who finished in 29th position, and Andy McFie, returning after a short break from competitive running to cross the line in 35th.

The Fell Championships will now go down to the wire with the final two races, the Great Whernside Race, which is also an English Championship counter, and the Race to the Summit, held at the end of October.

In the national arena, Todmorden's ultra distance athletes continued to make waves with fine performances at the High Peak 40 Mile Race. The race starts from Matlock before touring the trails and tracks around the Peak District, and was chosen as a counter for the Montrail UK Ultra Running Championships.

Starring for Todmorden was distance queen Chris Preston who comfortably saw off the opposition to take first place in a high quality field, finishing in a time of 7 hours and 3 minutes, almost half an hour clear of her nearest rival.

Fellow Harrier Phil Hodgson, took the veterans 50 prize in a time of 6 hours and 53 minutes, and joined her in the prizes.

These results leave the duo both likely to win national plaudits at the year's end, with Preston second in the ladies' national rankings and Hodgson first veteran man.

BATRUNS: THE BATS are BACK !

There will be an offroad **Batrun** every Wednesday from the packrun pub at 7.00pm. Join us for track and trail and moorland frolics if you hate the tarmac and love the mud as much as we do. Don't forget your headtorches and reflective tops.

The **Annual Halloween Bat Haunting** will go from the Queen in Tod on **Wed 31st Oct** to the eerie summit of Bridestones. Scary masks compulsory !

The **Annual Bat Stoodley Pike Firework Extravaganza** will go from Shoulder of Mutton, M'royd on **Wed 7th Nov** at 7.00pm. Don't forget to bring your biggest and loudest fireworks. (and a lighter!). If you haven't yet witnessed Ben C. attempting to set fire to his beard, or experienced being chased round the Pike by a fizz bang rocket, this is the outing for you.

The Caped Crusader